

of Wisconsin mounds are unstratified. Burials occur either beneath the apex or the rim, or at any level in a mound. Indications of the use of fire in connection with the burial ceremonies may accompany any mode of interment. This accounts for the mistaken notion that charred or partly consumed bones are evidences of human sacrifice or of cremation.

The burial of the dead in a folded (or sitting position) is known to have been a common practice of the Winnebago, as well as of other Indian tribes, who also followed other methods of interment. That it was also in vogue elsewhere is attested to by various authorities. The confused masses and bundled human bones noted in so many local mounds, plainly indicate communal burial, the bones of all persons dying in a village within a certain period of time being collected from scaffolds or other temporary depositories and interred together. This custom was common to the Indian tribes of various parts of the United States and Canada. The use of fire in their connection with burial ceremonies was a common Indian custom. The intrusive burials of modern Indians in the mounds the investigations of the Bureau have shown to be often of exactly the same type as the original burials for which the tumuli were constructed.

Depositing with the dead his pipe, weapons, ornaments or other effects was a custom common alike to the builders of the mounds and the modern Indians. The objects taken from the mounds do not differ in form or material from those known to have been in use among the Indians, and now to be found on their village sites and in their graves.

The supposition has long prevailed that the only method employed by the ancient Indians in disposing of their dead was by erecting mounds over them. If this were true the number of the remains in most mound groups would not account for the population that must have resided in their vicinity and been concerned in their construction. The presence of cemeteries in the vicinity of the mounds plainly indicates that many, perhaps the majority, of the ancient Indians were interred in ordinary graves.